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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1001  
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DEPT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, SE WILLIAMSON, AF/SPG, IO/PSC  
NSC FOR HUDSON AND PITTMAN  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#) [UG](#)

SUBJECT: UNMIS CONSIDERS MANDATE SHIFT IN WAKE OF LRA VIOLENCE

11. (SBU) SUMMARY: Following a succession of highly visible, high casualty LRA attacks in Southern Sudan, UN officials are discussing a temporary shift of UNMIS's peacekeeping mandate from Chapter Six to Chapter Seven. UNMIS Sector One officials, sensitive to criticism leveled against their Sector Six colleagues in the wake of the Abyei crisis, have committed to be "cautiously proactive" pending additional directives from New York, but emphasize any shift would be for a specific, limited duration. While the mandate shift would place UN forces in Southern Sudan on equal footing with their colleagues in the DRC, senior officials note that UNMIS is ill-equipped to implement a Chapter Seven mandate, and the burden for the South's security, and that of international and local NGO staff, must largely fall to the SPLA. GOSS President Salva Kiir has stood firm behind his stated one-month deadline for a signed peace agreement before resorting to military force to deal "definitively" with Sudan's LRA problem. END SUMMARY.

12. (SBU) Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) forces attacked an SPLA company outside of the Nabanga assembly area on June 5, killing 25, including the company commander. This was an unprovoked attack against the same SPLA unit that had been providing food and medical care to LRA forces since the inception of the Juba Peace Talks in 12006. SPLA Chief of Staff Oyai Deng Ajak told Acting CG that the SPLA was given advance notice of the LRA approach, but the company commander assumed erroneously that LRA forces were bringing messages to revive stalled peace talks, and were consequently unprepared for the assault. On June 7, LRA forces attacked the village of Rosero killing scores of civilians, including the paramount chief.

13. (SBU) Against the backdrop of renewed discussions between Kampala and Kinshasa on potential joint operations against the LRA, the SPLA has temporarily delegated to the Governor of Eastern Equatoria state "full authority" over SPLA disarmament exercises so that Juba-based commanders can refocus on two fronts: the 1956 North/South border and "the fresh, mercenary-like threat posed by the LRA." The SPLA Chief of Staff has downplayed the possibility of Khartoum's direct role in the recent fighting, but the SPLM's continued distrust of their NCP partners would not allow him to rule it out. High-level Congolese and Ugandan delegations arrive in Juba June 10 to discuss the Government of Southern Sudan's role in any forthcoming operations.

14. (SBU) UNMIS/Juba is examining after-action reports linked to the Sector Six response in Abyei following direct criticism of the UN security response from Government of Southern Sudan officials and Foreign Minister Deng Alor. For the SPLM in particular, it has been difficult to accept how UNMIS was able to interpose between forces during SAF/SPLA clashes in Malakal, Upper Nile state in 2006, yet they were unable to similarly deploy in Abyei. (COMMENT: UNMIS officials note the weaponry used in the Abyei attacks was significantly different, and it, plus a conservative read of the Chapter Six mandate, prevented robust deployment. END COMMENT) Although a mandate upgrade would insulate UNMIS from the LRA perceiving it to be the "weaker" UN force compared with MONUC,

Sector One Commander Colonel Saluhhedin Maiji was pessimistic about a possible mandate shift's impact beyond "symbolic public consumption." "Unlike MONUC, we do not have attack helicopters, we do not have the necessary armor to enhance our APCs, nor do we have the right type of weapons for an aggressive Chapter Seven posture. We cannot bring in what we would need fast enough. The most we could do would be to achieve Chapter Seven, but abstain from direct action." The burden for UNMIS's Bangladeshi military observers is daunting: a 600-man force equipped with six armored personnel carriers is charged with civilian protection throughout a sector nearly twice as large as Bangladesh itself.

15. (SBU) Broader discussion with the Government of Southern Sudan of a possible UNMIS mandate shift in the South is on hold pending deliberations within the GOSS Presidency and the Southern Sudan Defense Council about the scope of the current LRA threat, and Juba's reaction to messages from Kinshasa and Kampala. UNMIS and UN officials in Juba spent the greater part of the weekend in planning meetings with the assumption that a military campaign will start soon. Currently, no UN agencies plan to withdraw from the affected area, and all UNMIS Team Sites are at their highest level of alert.

DATTA